

## city of edmonds development information



## Fence Permit Submittal Requirements

**PERMIT REQUIRED:** A permit is required for fences which are greater than 3 feet in height, measured from the finished grade, which are also within 10 feet of any street right-of-way or access easement or within 30 feet of a corner. Fence height is limited to six feet unless a variance is obtained (contact the Planning Division for information). Height shall be measured from the finished grade to the top fence surface, board, rail, cap or wire.  
A fence permit shall be required for **any** fence within a critical area or its buffer.

**CODES:** Edmonds Community Development Code Chapter 17.30

**DEFINITION:** A fence is a combination of, wood, metal, masonry or other material which provides a visual and/or physical obstruction to an observer at ground level. This definition shall exclude any portion of a retaining wall which is below finished grade and which is contiguous with the fence. Any portion of a base or posthole for the fence, which does not retain earth, shall not be considered a retaining wall but rather part of the fence.

**FEE:** Please refer to City fee schedules.

### SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. A Critical Areas Determination, issued by the Planning Division ([See Handout #P20](#))
2. Permit Application [Form A](#)
3. Plot Plan - Three (3) copies, scaled 1"=20' (one (1) of the three (3) plot plans must be no larger than 8 1/2" x 14") showing the following: ([See Attachment A](#))
  - a) Property lines, existing structures within the property, proposed fence location and height
  - b) Streams, drainage courses, fire hydrants, water meters, power poles
  - c) Adjacent streets, roads, alleys, access easements, driveways
  - d) Description of proposed fence (i.e., 6 foot cedar, chain link, etc.)

# **SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS & REQUIREMENTS**

## **STREET AND CORNER RESTRICTIONS**

For site obstruction concerns, fence height shall normally be limited to three (3) feet within ten (10) feet of any street or access easement, and within thirty (30) feet of any corner unless an exception is approved. **Exception**, if the City Traffic Engineer finds no sight or obstruction hazard from the street or nearby property, fences of up to 6 feet in height may be approved.

NOTE: No fence or hedge may be constructed or maintained if it creates a sight or obstruction hazard to the street or to nearby property. No deviation from code requirements shall be permitted by the City Traffic Engineer without staff review of the following factors; traffic visibility, sight hazards, private and public safety considerations, lot shape, location and topography, location of adjacent public and private structures, including natural features such as trees, shrubs and landscaping.

## **FENCES CONSTRUCTED ON RETAINING WALLS OR ROCKERIES**

When a retaining wall or rockery (three feet in height or greater) is contiguous to, and below, a proposed fence; fences may be constructed, for the purposes of safety, no greater than 4 feet above the top of the retaining wall or rockery. ([See Handout #B62](#) for retaining walls)

## **SWIMMING POOL FENCES** ([See Handout #B75](#) for swimming pools)

The minimum height of single family residential swimming pool fences is 4 feet with openings designed according to Appendix G of the International Residential Code.

Fences for public or commercial swimming pools are regulated by WAC 246-260-031. (Washington State Dept. of Health).

## **CITY RIGHT OF WAY AND ENCROACHMENT PERMITS**

Fences shall typically be located on private property. Private property lines may not be clear when properties are located adjacent to undeveloped City streets (i.e., streets without sidewalks on each side). The City's Official Street Map indicates right-of-way areas that the City presides over on every public street. The City may or may not be utilizing the entire width of right-of-way on every street. Check the Official Street Map in the City Engineering Division to determine the street right-of-way width, then field measure the actual street to determine the width of right-of-way and extent of City property. Private fences may not be located within developed or undeveloped City right-of-way unless the City Engineer approves a separate Encroachment Permit. ([See Handout #E26](#)) For more information on locating property lines ([See Handout #B59.](#))

## **UTILITY EASEMENTS AND DRAINAGE COURSES OR WATERWAYS**

Special restrictions and/or provisions may apply to fences and gates that are constructed over, or adjacent to utility easements and/or drainage courses or waterways. Contact a City Engineering Technician for more specific information.

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN BOARD APPROVAL**

Design approval is required for all commercial and multifamily fences, contact the Planning Division for more information. ([See Handout #P7](#))

Revised 9/2010

## **VARIANCE INFORMATION**      *(See Handout #P86)*

A variance is required for any fence greater than 6 feet in height, contact the Planning Division for specific information.

NOTE: Trellises or arbors can, under certain circumstances, be above 6 feet in height (see the descriptions of these features, below).

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Fence:** A fence is a combination of materials, wood, metal, masonry or other material which provides a visual and/or physical obstruction to an observer at ground level.

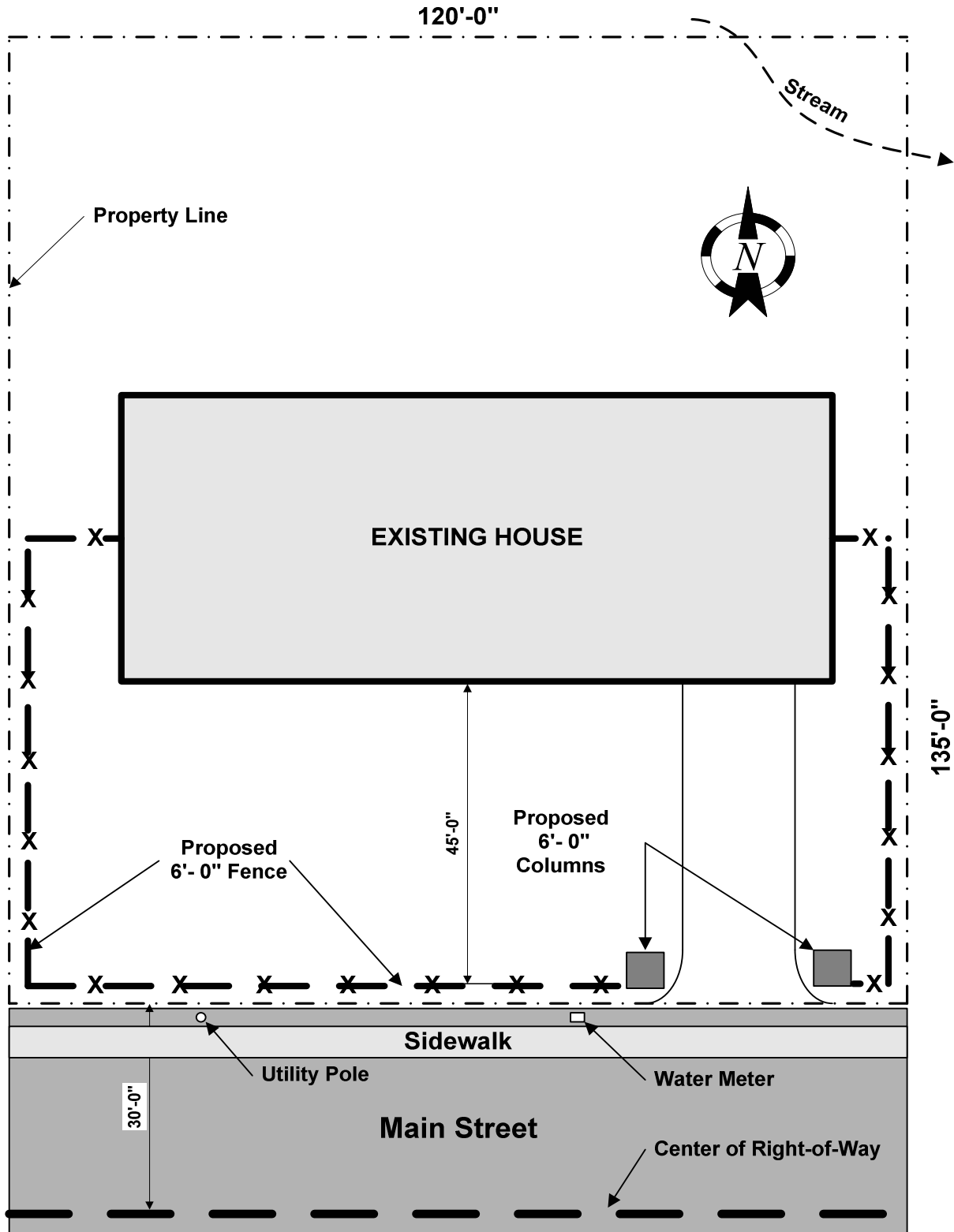
**Trellis:** A trellis is a horizontal structure of open lattice work designed and intended to support the growth of vines or other vegetation, or a horizontal decorative element composed of lattice work which admits light and air through a predominantly open design. A trellis is defined to be a fence or a part of a fence, and is therefore regulated according to the fence requirements explained in this handout. Note that a trellis which has a horizontal element, which is more than thirty-six (36) inches in width, measured perpendicular to the fence or trellis is considered to be an arbor (see arbor definition below). Trellises are subject to the same height limits that apply to fences, with the following exceptions:

- A trellis up to two (2) additional feet in height to a maximum of eight (8) feet may be added as a decorative element to a fence so long as the combined length of the trellis(es) constructed facing a property line do not exceed twenty five percent (25%) of the total length of that property line.
- A trellis up to two (2) additional feet in height to a maximum of eight (8) feet may be added as a decorative element to a fence facing a street, alley or access easement so long as the trellis remains free of any plantings, vegetation or other visual obstruction.

**Arbor:** An arbor is a separate free-standing or attached structure that has a lattice roof and lattice walls, or a horizontal lattice work structure serving to roof a gate or entrance way. An arbor is considered to be an accessory structure, and is regulated accordingly. A building permit is required for an arbor, which exceeds 120 square feet when accessory to a Commercial or Multifamily building, and which exceeds 200 square feet when accessory to a Single Family Residence (*See Handout #B2 for accessory structures*). An arbor up to three (3) additional feet in height to a nine (9) foot maximum may be constructed over a gate, walkway or entrance within a required setback.

NOTE: THE PURPOSE OF THIS HANDOUT IS TO ASSIST THE PUBLIC IN COMPLYING WITH DETAILED PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS. IT IS NOT A COMPLETE LIST OF PERMIT OR CODE REQUIREMENTS AND SHOULD NOT BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OWNER/DESIGN PROFESSIONAL TO REVIEW THE SUBMITTAL FOR COMPLETENESS AND APPLICABILITY TO OTHER CODES. ONLY COMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED BY THE CITY FOR REVIEW.

# Sample Fence Plot Plan



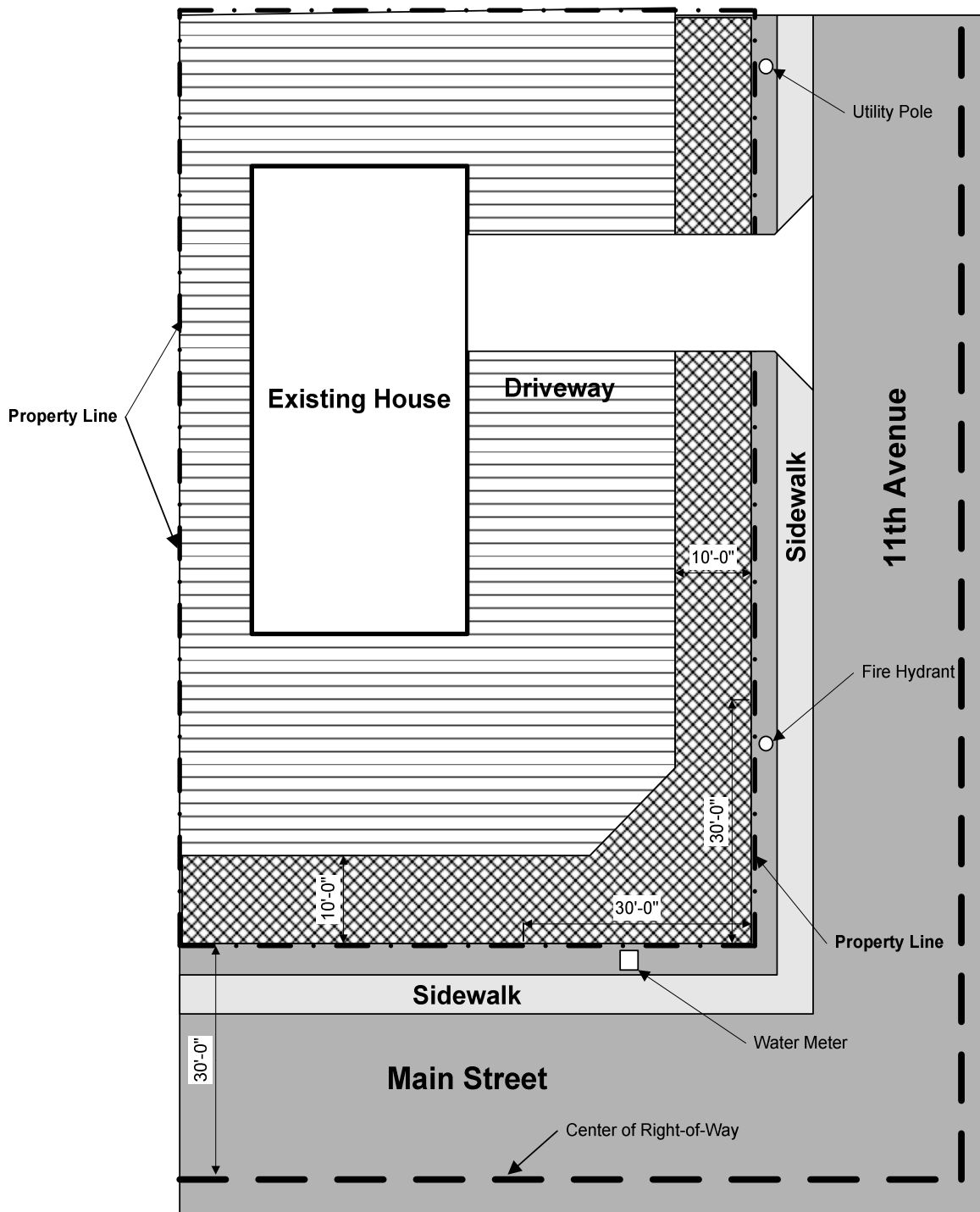
Property Owner: John Doe

Scale: 1" = 20'

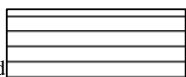
Revised 7/2010 Property Address: 9923 Main Street

**ATTACHMENT A**

# Fence Height Restrictions on Corner Lot



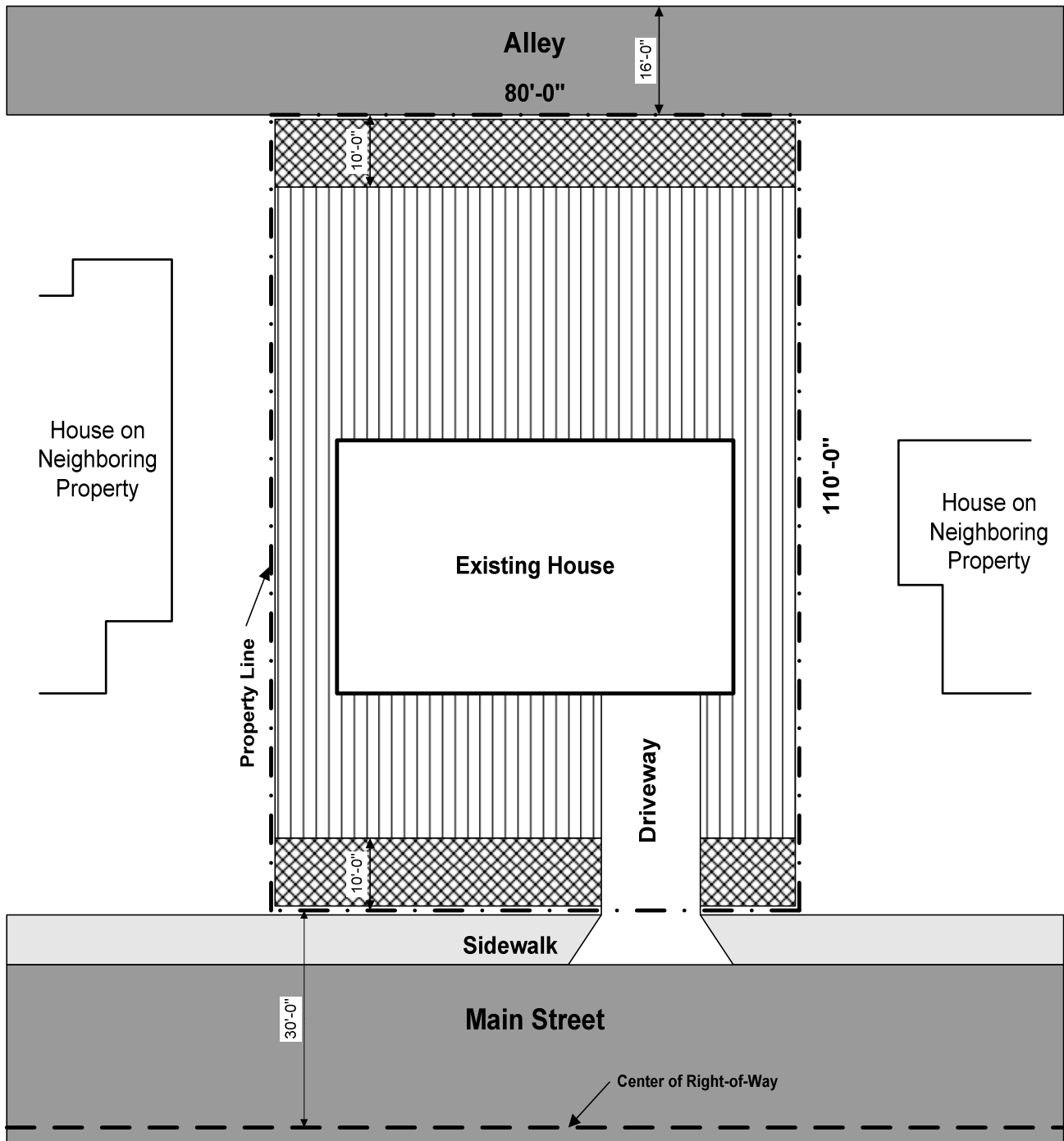
**= 3'-0" Maximum Fence Area (unless approved by City Traffic Engineer up to 6 feet)**



**= 6'-0" Maximum Fence Area**

Revised

# Fence restrictions within 10'-0" of City Right-of-Way



= Permit Required for fence greater than 3'-0"



= No Permit Required for fence 6'-0" or less